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2-6-2020

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Ouachita News Bureau

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For immediate release

## **Ouachita to host International Food Festival Feb. 18**

*By Ashly Stracener*

February 6, 2020

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at [newsbureau@obu.edu](mailto:newsbureau@obu.edu) or (870) 245-5208

A graphic of a white teacup with the text "INTERNATIONAL FOOD FESTIVAL" and "TEA OR CHAI?" written on it. A small tag hanging from the cup says "TEA or CHAI? 2020".

## Featuring tea, coffee & food from around the globe

**FEBRUARY 18 | TICKETS \$5 | 5:30 PM**

ARKADELPHIA, Ark.—Ouachita Baptist University's International Club and Daniel and Betty Jo Grant Center for International Education will host the 2020 International Food Festival (IFF) on Tuesday, Feb. 18, at 5:30 p.m. in Walker Conference Center. Tickets will be \$5 each at the door.

Approximately 35 different countries will be represented through cuisine and Ouachita students and faculty. This year's theme, "Tea or Chai?," was decided upon by an elected group of International Club student members.

"The idea was based in linguistics," said Micah Hitt, director of Ouachita's English as a Second Language program. "The vast majority of languages throughout the world use one of two ways to communicate the concept of tea. If tea arrived in a place via land, the word for it is rooted in 'cha.' If it arrived in a place via oceanic means, then the word is rooted in 'te.' I think that this idea of 'Tea or Chai?' is a concept that underscores the idea that this word brings together so many languages and cultures from around the world."

"I am in my 32<sup>nd</sup> year of working at Ouachita and have been involved in and participated in this event," said Ian Cosh, Ouachita's vice president for community and international engagement. "It has always been a happy event for me, and it brings me satisfaction seeing our international and third-culture students share their cultural experiences with others."



For Estelle Zhang, a senior finance major from Shandong Province, China, and this semester's International Club president, the International Food Fest "is the biggest event for the International Club and can surely draw international students and native students closer through food and fun activities."



Entertainment for the evening will include a Brazilian artist who will present bossa nova, a style of Brazilian music. Additionally, international Ouachita students, faculty and staff will assist in hosting the event by serving dishes from their respective countries.

"We will be dressed in traditional clothes, so come take pictures with the students, the flags, ask us about our dishes and hear stories about different cultures," said Melissa Lee, a junior music major from Singapore. "This is a great time to build relationships with the international students as we always need community and a great support system to successfully finish our time here at Ouachita.

"I think that students from the international club are really excited to share home-cooked dishes from their homeland and to meet their 'fans' who make their yearly pilgrimage to Ouachita's campus," Lee said. "Most of the dishes offered at this event cannot be found anywhere in this region, so I think that hosting an event like this is an extraordinary experience for us internationals: we bring to life a little bit of home from each of us and offer visitors a gastronomic world-tour in a single evening."

For more information about the International Food Festival, contact the Grant Center at (870) 245-5197.

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PHOTOS AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD <https://obu.edu/news/2020/02/06/ouachita-host-international-food-festival-feb-18/>